

## Українська Католицька Церква Св.Родини

Парох: о. Микола Олвіян Попович  
225 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St.

Lindenhurst, NY 11757

Phone: (631) 225-1168 / Fax: (631) 225-1177

E-mail: [popovici1@aol.com](mailto:popovici1@aol.com)

Web Page: [www.holyfamilyucc.com](http://www.holyfamilyucc.com)

Facebook: *Saturday School:*

<https://www.facebook.com/HFUkrainianSchool>



## Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church

225 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Lindenhurst, NY 11757

Pastor: Fr. Olvian Nicolae Popovici

Phone : (631) 225-1168/ Fax:(631) 225-1177

Parish Center: (631) 225 - 1203

E-mail: [olvianpopovici@yahoo.com](mailto:olvianpopovici@yahoo.com)

Trustees: Silvia Smith (516) 712 - 5526

Nadiya Moskalyuk (631) 579-1519

Choir Director: Iryna Popovych (631) 943-3348

Nataliya Popovici – **English cantor**

Web Page: [www.holyfamilyucc.com](http://www.holyfamilyucc.com)

**Sunday Divine Liturgies: 9:00 am - English / 10:15 am - Ukrainian**

**Weekday Divine Liturgies: 8:00 am or 9:00 am or 7:00 pm - Holy Days Liturgy: 9:00 am or Previous Day at 7:00 pm**

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CHURCH BULLETIN – ЦЕРКОВНИЙ ВІСНИК

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### Feast of the Encounter of Our Lord: Exploring the Blessing of Candles Tradition



Explore the rich traditions of the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord, celebrated on Feb. 2 in the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Rooted in the liturgical practices of Jerusalem, this feast dates back to the fourth century and has a fascinating history of development and adaptation. Learn about the use of candles and lights, symbolizing the “True Light,” and discover the connection between the blessing of candles and divine protection. As we delve into these customs, let us appreciate their profound meanings and continue to embrace them as expressions of our faith and devotion. Jerusalem, a city hallowed by the suffering and sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ, holds profound significance. Amidst its sacred history, the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord emerged, becoming a cherished tradition. Jerusalem is considered holy due to the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. The Church of Jerusalem holds significance as the Mother Church of all Christians, where the liturgical year originated.

#### Feast of the Presentation: A Rich Tradition

The celebration of the Feast of the Presentation began in the fourth century in Jerusalem. The liturgical festivities, commemorating events from Christ’s life, gained prominence with pilgrims’ participation after the Constantinian Peace of 313.

#### 1. Early Celebrations:

- The oldest account dates back to a Spanish Nun, Egeria, in the fourth century.
- Initially called “The Fortieth Day After the Nativity,” it later became “The Encounter of Our Lord.”
- Emperor Justinian I established the celebration in the Byzantine Empire in 542.
- Pope Gregory the Great introduced it in Rome in the sixth century.

#### 2. Symbolism of Light and Candles:

- St. Simeon’s hymn referred to Jesus as the “Light to the Gentiles,” inspiring the use of candles.
- The procession symbolized Joseph and Mary’s journey to Jerusalem.
- Candles symbolize the Divine Presence, following the tradition from

the Old Testament.

#### 3. Candles in Eastern Tradition:

- The use of candles in processions was mentioned in the biography of St. Sabas in 556.
- Introduced by hermits in the sixth century, candles were used for a prayerful atmosphere.
- The Council of Nicaea II approved offering lights in honor of icons in 787.

#### 4. Blessing of Candles:

- Emperor Justinian I initiated candlelight processions in 541 for Divine Protection.
- Similar processions arose during times of danger.
- The blessing of candles on the Feast of the Presentation started in the seventeenth century.
- Candles were distributed to the faithful for Divine protection.
- In homes, blessed candles are used during sickness, and storms, and to dispel fear in children. The blessing of candles on the Feast of the Presentation embodies the Gospel narrative, introducing Jesus as the “Light of the people.” Candles, lit during liturgical services and in homes, signify Christ’s abiding presence. The ritual, dating back centuries, connects believers to the sacred history of Jerusalem and emphasizes the power of communal prayer. The burning candles contribute to the fervor of prayers, symbolizing a continuation of devotion beyond the church walls. As the faithful carry lighted candles in procession, they seek the “Glory of God” and implore His mercy in times of sickness and distress. This sacred tradition remains a timeless expression of faith and reliance on God’s protective power.

Take it from Edmonton Ukrainian Eparchy.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

1. Phanuel means ‘face of God’ and he is Anna’s father. It is a play on words, that a prophetess recognizes the Messiah and her father’s name means ‘face of God’.
2. Simeon means ‘He who has seen God’.
3. In the halo of Jesus, there is always a cross which represents His destiny, to die for the salvation of humanity on the cross.
4. There are also three letters in the halo of Jesus – “O”, “W” and “H”. These are Greek letters which mean “The Being” or in Hebrew “I AM”, the name revealed to Moses by the Lord speaking from the Burning Bush.
5. The Feast Day of the Meeting is the meeting of the Old and New Covenants. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant and gives to us the New Covenant through the Eucharist.
6. In this Feast Day, each one of us ought to be a Temple of God to which Mary brings Jesus. And each should, like Simeon, take the Child in our arms and say to the Father: My eyes have seen Your salvation. And having seen and touched the Saviour, we are released from the hold that sin has on us and in peace we can leave the realm of evil.

### Sunday of The Last Judgement (Meatfare Sunday)



**Biblical Story:** The commemoration for this Sunday is taken from the parable of our Lord Jesus Christ concerning his Second Coming and the Last Judgment of all, both the living and the dead. In Matthew 25:31-46, Christ speaks about what will happen at this specific point in time when He will “come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him” (v. 31). At His coming, “He will sit on the throne of His glory,” and all of the nations will be gathered before Him. He will separate them “as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats” (v. 32). The sheep will be placed on His right hand, and the goats on the left. To the sheep, He will say “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (vv. 33-34) This kingdom is offered to the sheep because of their compassion and service to those in need. Jesus says, “...for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.” The sheep, who are the righteous chosen for the kingdom, will ask how this could be so. They will ask Jesus when was He hungry or thirsty, a stranger, naked, and in prison. He will answer them by saying, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to the least of these My brethren, you did it to me” (vv. 35-40). Christ the King, seated on His throne of judgment, will then turn to the goats on His left and say, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (v. 41). He will condemn them because they did not feed Him when He was hungry, give Him drink when He was thirsty, take Him in when He was a stranger, clothe Him when He was naked, visit Him when He was sick or in prison. The goats will ask the Lord, “When did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?” Then He will answer them saying, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me” (vv. 42-45). Jesus concludes His words on the Last Judgment by stating that those on the left “will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (v. 46). On the past two Sundays of this pre-Lenten period, the focus was placed on God’s patience and limitless compassion, of His readiness to accept every sinner who returns to Him. *On this third Sunday, we are powerfully reminded of a complementary truth: no one is so patient and so merciful as God, but even He does not forgive those who do not repent. The God of love is also a God of righteousness, and when Christ comes again in glory, He will come as our Judge.* Such is the message of Lent to each of us: turn back while there is still time, repent before the End comes. This Sunday sets before us the eschatological dimension of Lent: the Great Fast is a preparation

for the Second Coming of the Savior, for the eternal Passover in the Age to Come, a theme that is also the focus of the first three days of Holy Week. But the judgment is not only in the future. Here and now, each day and each hour, in hardening our hearts toward others and in failing to respond to the opportunities we are given of helping them, we are already passing judgment on ourselves. Another theme of this Sunday is that of love. When Christ comes to judge us, what will be the criterion of His judgment? The parable of the Last Judgment answers: love—not a mere humanitarian concern for abstract justice and the anonymous “poor,” but concrete and personal love for the human person—the *specific persons that we encounter each day in our lives*. Christian love is the “possible impossibility” to see Christ in another person, whoever he or she is, and whom God, in His eternal and mysterious plan, has decided to introduce into my life, be it only for a few moments, not as an occasion for a “good deed” or an exercise in philanthropy, but as the beginning of an eternal companionship in God Himself. The parable of the Last Judgment is about Christian love. Not all of us are called to work for “humanity,” yet each one of us has received the gift and the grace of Christ’s love. We know that all persons ultimately need this personal love—the *recognition in them of their unique soul in which the beauty of the whole creation is reflected in a unique way*. We also know that people are in prison and are sick and thirsty and hungry because that personal love has been denied them. And, finally, we know that however narrow and limited the framework of our personal existence, *each one of us has been made responsible for a tiny part of the Kingdom of God*, made responsible by that very gift of Christ’s love. Thus, on whether or not we have accepted this responsibility, on whether we have loved or refused to love, shall we be judged. The Sunday of the Last Judgment is also known as Meatfare Sunday. This is the last day that meat can be eaten before the Lenten fast. Dairy products are allowed on each day of this week, even Wednesday and Friday. The next Sunday is the Sunday of Cheesefare, It is the last day that dairy products can be eaten prior to the commencement of Great Lent. Today’s Gospel about the last judgment shows the end result of true repentance, and also the “flip side” – the outcome for those who do not repent. *It is a frightening spectacle, and not a pleasant one to meditate upon, but absolute necessary for us to remember.* Lets us talk about how Jesus Christ came the first time, how His second coming will be, and what we must do to hear the blessed words: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”.

#### Please Note:

#### Candles in our Holy Church

For the Feast of the Encounter-Meeting of Our Lord it is a pious and venerable tradition in our Holy Church to bless candles. It is impossible to imagine an Eastern Church without burning candles. Candles made of beeswax are used in our Holy Church as a form of sacrifice and devotion to God or Saints. They are used in various Divine Services and ceremonies and are symbolic of Christ, who is “the Light of the World.” According to a different symbolism, the two elements of a candle represent the two natures of Christ: the Divine (the burning wick) and the Human (the wax body). According to our venerable father Simeon of Thessalonica (XV century), the pure wax symbolizes the purity and innocence of people offering it. The wax is offered as a sign of our repentance for our obstinacy and willfulness. The softness and malleability of the wax speak of our readiness to obey God. The flame of the candle shows the warmth of love to God. We should not put up a candle just for the sake of the ritual, with our hearts remaining cold.

**A Jubilee of Grace: The Year of Saint Francis of Assisi (2026–2027)**

By decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary issued on January 10, 2026, at the request of Pope Leo XIV, the Church has solemnly proclaimed a special Year of Saint Francis of Assisi, running from January 10, 2026, to January 10, 2027. This Jubilee Year commemorates the 800th anniversary of the passage into Heaven of Saint Francis of Assisi (†1226), the Seraphic Patriarch and one of the most beloved saints in Christian history. More than a remembrance of the past, this jubilee is offered as a gift of grace for the entire Church—not only for the Franciscan Family, but for all the faithful—so that this anniversary may become a moment of authentic spiritual renewal in our own time. **A Saint for Our Times**

The decree emphasizes the enduring relevance of Saint Francis in today's world. His radical Gospel life—marked by poverty, humility, peace, and love for creation—continues to speak powerfully to a humanity wounded by division, violence, and indifference. The Holy Father invites all Christians to “become saints in the contemporary world, following the example of the Seraphic Patriarch,” transforming hope into concrete charity and a sincere commitment to peace.

In this jubilee, the Church calls the faithful to rediscover Francis not merely as a gentle lover of nature, but as a man conformed to Christ Crucified, whose life was a living proclamation of the Gospel.

**The Gift of a Plenary Indulgence**

Throughout the entire Year of Saint Francis, the Apostolic Penitentiary grants the possibility of obtaining a plenary indulgence, applicable either to oneself or in suffrage for the souls in Purgatory. The indulgence is granted under the usual conditions:

- Sacramental Confession
- Eucharistic Communion
- Prayer according to the intentions of the Holy Father
- A heart truly detached from sin

**How the Faithful May Obtain the Indulgence**

The indulgence may be obtained by:

- Members of the Franciscan Family
- Ecclesial communities inspired by the Franciscan charism
- All the faithful

During the Jubilee Year, the faithful are invited to:

- Make a pilgrimage to a Franciscan church or to a place of worship dedicated to Saint Francis
- Participate in Jubilee rites, or pause for prayer and meditation
- Conclude with the Our Father, the Creed, and invocations to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Francis, Saint Clare of Assisi, and the Saints of the Franciscan Family

Mercy for All, Especially the Suffering

With pastoral sensitivity, special consideration is given to the elderly, the sick, and those unable to leave their homes. They, too, may obtain the indulgence by spiritually uniting themselves to the jubilee celebrations, offering their prayers and sufferings to God with trust and love.

The Apostolic Penitentiary also encourages priests to make themselves generously available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, so that this jubilee may truly become a time of mercy and healing for the People of God.

**A Time of Favor for the Whole Church**

The Year of Saint Francis presents itself as a time of favor and grace, offered freely to all. As the Holy Father expresses his hope, may this jubilee awaken anew in hearts “feelings of Christian charity

toward one's neighbor and an authentic desire for harmony and peace among peoples.”

Eight centuries after his death, Saint Francis still calls the Church—and the world—to conversion. This Jubilee Year invites us not only to honor him, but to walk in his footsteps, rebuilding the Church through lives transformed by the Gospel.

**Why Catholics Call Priests “Father”?**

One of the most repeated objections against Catholicism is the claim that calling priests “Father” disobeys Jesus' words in Matthew 23:9. But a careful and complete reading of Scripture, combined with early Christian history, shows that this Catholic practice is entirely biblical, apostolic, and consistent with the faith of the early Church.

1. The Verse Protestants Cite — and Why It Cannot Be Literal  
Protestants often quote Jesus:

*“Call no man on earth your father, for you have one Father who is in heaven.” — Matthew 23:9*

At first glance, this appears straightforward. But if interpreted literally, it leads to impossible contradictions.

If Christians cannot call anyone “father,” then they must also obey:

*“You have one teacher.” — Matthew 23:8*

*“You have one leader.” — Matthew 23:10*

Therefore:

*You cannot call your biological father father.*

*You cannot call someone teacher at school.*

*You cannot refer to any leader—political, religious, or otherwise.*

Protestants must stop calling their pastors “Pastor,” “Teacher,” or “Reverend.”

But both Catholics and Protestants call their parents mother and father, which means even Protestants do not interpret Matthew 23 literally.

What Jesus Actually Condemned?

In Matthew 23, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for:

- Pride
- Hypocrisy
- Seeking titles to elevate themselves
- Usurping God's authority

Jesus is condemning spiritual arrogance, not the use of honorable titles in a humble way.

This is clear because the Bible itself repeatedly uses father, teacher, and leader for human beings.

2. The Bible Calls Human Spiritual Leaders “Father”

A. Abraham is Called “Father”

*“Abraham is the father of us all.” — Romans 4:16*

*“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day.” — John 8:56*

If calling someone “father” were forbidden, then Abraham's title would be blasphemous—and the New Testament itself would be in error.

3. The New Testament Uses “Father” for Spiritual Leadership

A. St. Paul Calls Himself a Spiritual Father

*“I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.” — 1 Corinthians 4:15*

*“I appeal to you as my dear children.”*

*— 1 Corinthians 4:14*

B. Paul Calls Timothy His Child

*“To Timothy, my true son in the faith.” — 1 Timothy 1:2*

### C. Paul Calls Titus His Child

*"To Titus, my true child in our common faith."* — *Titus* 1:4

Spiritual fatherhood is not symbolic—it is real.

Paul exercised true pastoral care, guidance, discipline, and teaching—everything a spiritual father does.

### 4. Old Testament: Priests and Prophets Were Called "Father"

The Old Testament directly uses father as a spiritual title.

#### A. A Levite Priest Is Called "Father"

*"Stay with me. Be a father and a priest to me."*

— *Judges* 17:10–13

Here, the word "father" is used as a religious title for a priest.

#### B. Prophets Were Called Father

*"My father, my father! The chariots of Israel!"* — *2 Kings* 2:12 (*Elisha addressing Elijah*)

*"My father, my father!"* — *2 Kings* 13:14 (*King Joash addressing Elisha*)

If calling a priest or prophet father were sinful, then the Holy Spirit would not have inspired these verses.

### Early Church Writings: The First Christians Called Priests "Father"

The earliest Christians—long before the Bible was canonized—used father as a normal title for bishops and priests.

#### 1. St. Ignatius of Antioch (AD 107)

Calls bishops and presbyters spiritual fathers of the community.

(*Letters to the Magnesians, Trallians, and Smyrnaeans*)

#### 2. St. Clement of Alexandria (AD 200)

Refers to bishops and priests as "our fathers and teachers."

(*Stromata* 1.1)

#### 3. St. Athanasius (4th century)

Addressed bishops as "holy father" in his epistles.

#### 4. St. Jerome (4th century)

Describes monastic leaders as "spiritual fathers."

#### 5. The Desert Fathers (3rd–4th century)

Early monks were literally called "Abbas" (father).

From this word we get abbot, meaning "father of the monastery."

Calling spiritual leaders "father" has been universal from the earliest

days of Christianity—and never considered contrary to Matthew

23:9.

### Debunking Common Protestant Objections

Objection 1: "Only God is our Father!"

✓ True—but God is also our only Shepherd, yet He appoints human shepherds (Eph 4:11).

✓ God is our only Judge, yet He established human judges (Deut 16:18).

✓ God is our only Teacher, yet the New Testament calls many human teachers (Acts 13:1).

Human roles share in God's authority—they do not replace Him.

Objection 2: "Jesus banned religious titles."

If Jesus literally banned religious titles, Protestants must stop using:

Pastor

Reverend

Teacher

Minister

Doctor

Bishop

Brother

Elder

But they don't.

Because they know Jesus was condemning pride, not titles used humbly.

Objection 3: "Paul didn't mean father literally."

Paul specifically says:

*"I became your father."*

The Greek word *egenēthēn* ("became") refers to an actual spiritual reality—not a metaphor.

Objection 4: "No one in Scripture calls a priest father except the Old Covenant."

False—Paul clearly claims New Testament spiritual fatherhood.

And Christians continue it because the apostles modeled it.

### Conclusion: Calling Priests "Father" Is Biblical and Apostolic

The Catholic use of "Father" for priests is:

✓ Grounded in Scripture

✓ Affirmed by St. Paul

✓ Practiced in the Old Testament

✓ Taught by the Early Church

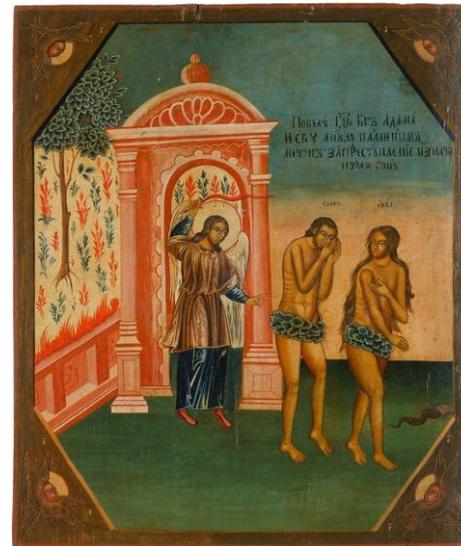
✓ Universal in Christian history

✓ Not forbidden by Jesus in any literal sense

Jesus was condemning pride—not the respectful use of spiritual titles.

Catholics call priests "Father" because they are spiritual fathers who guide us, nourish us with the Sacraments, and lead us in the life of Christ—just as the apostles did.

### Forgiveness (Cheese-Fare Sunday)



*The Following is an excerpt from Great Lent, by Alexander Schmemmann*

Finally comes the last day of preparation for Lent, usually called "Forgiveness Sunday," but whose other liturgical name must also be remembered: the "Expulsion of Adam from the Paradise of Bliss." This name summarizes indeed the entire preparation for Lent. By now we know that man was created for paradise, for knowledge of God and communion with Him. Man's sin has deprived him of that blessed life and his existence on earth is exile. Christ, the Savior of the world, opens the door of paradise to everyone who follows Him, and the Church, by revealing to us the beauty of the Kingdom, makes our life a pilgrimage toward our heavenly fatherland. Thus, at the beginning of Lent, we are like Adam: Adam was expelled from paradise through food; Sitting, therefore, in front of it he cried: "Woe to me.... One commandment of God have I transgressed, depriving myself of all that

is good; Paradise holy! Planted for me, And now because of Eve closed to me; Pray to thy Creator and mine that I may be filled again by thy blossom." Then answered the Savior to him: "I wish not my creation to perish; I desire it to be saved and to know the truth; For I will not turn away him who comes to Me...." Lent is the liberation of our enslavement to sin, from the prison of "this world." And the Gspel lesson of this last Sunday (Matt. 6:14-21) sets the conditions for that *liberation*. The first one is *fasting* - the refusal to accept the desires and urges of our fallen nature as normal, the effort to free ourselves from the dictatorship of flesh and matter over the spirit. To be effective, however, our fast must not be hypocritical, a "showing off." We must "appear not unto men to fast but to our Father who is in secret." The second condition is *forgiveness* - "If you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you." The triumph of sin, the main sign of its rule over the world, is division, opposition, separation, hatred. Therefore, the first break through this fortress of sin is forgiveness: the return to unity, solidarity, love. To forgive is to put between me and my "enemy" the radiant forgiveness of God Himself. To forgive is to reject the hopeless "dead-ends" of human relations and to refer them to Christ. Forgiveness is truly a "breakthrough" of the Kingdom into this sinful and fallen world. Lent actually begins at Vespers of that Sunday. This unique service, so deep and beautiful, is absent from so many of our churches! Yet nothing reveals better the "tonality" of Great Lent in the Church; nowhere is better manifested its profound appeal to man. The service begins as solemn Vespers with clergy in bright vestments. The hymns (stichira) which follow the Psalm "Lord, I have cried..." announce the coming of Lent and, beyond Lent, the approach of Pascha!

**Let us begin the time of fasting in light!**

**Preparing ourselves for the spiritual efforts.**

**Let us purify our soul; let us purify our body.**

**As from food, let us abstain from all passion**

**And enjoy the virtues of the spirit,**

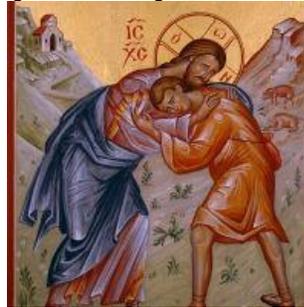
**So that perfected in time by love**

**We may all be made worthy to see**

**The Passion of Christ and the Holy Pascha - In spiritual joy!**

Then comes, as usual, the Entrance with the evening hymn: "O Gladsome radiance of the holy glory..." The celebrant then proceeds to the "high place" behind the altar for the proclamation of the evening *Prokeimenon* which always announces the end of one and the beginning of another day. This day's *Great Prokeimenon* announces thus the beginning of Lent: Turn not away Thy face from Thy servant for I am afflicted! Hear me speedily. Attend to my soul and deliver it! Listen to the unique melody of this verse - to this cry that suddenly fills the church: "...for I am afflicted!" - and you will understand this starting point of Lent: the mysterious mixture of despair and hope, of darkness and light. All preparation has now come to an end. I stand before God, before the glory and the beauty of His Kingdom. I realize that I belong to it, that I have no other home, no other joy, no other goal; I also realize that I am exiled from it into the darkness and sadness of sin, "for I am afflicted!" And finally, I realize that only God can help in that affliction, that only He can "attend to my soul." Repentance is, above everything else, a desperate call for that divine help. Five times we repeat the *Prokeimenon*. And then, Lent is here! Bright vestments are put aside; lights are extinguished. When the celebrant intones the petitions for the evening litany, the choir responds in the lenten "key." For the first time the lenten prayer of St. Ephraim accompanied by prostrations is read. At the end of the service all the faithful approach the priest and one another asking for mutual forgiveness. But as they perform this rite of reconciliation, as Lent is inaugurated by this

movement of love, reunion and brotherhood, the choir sings the Paschal hymns. We will have to wander forty days through the desert of Lent. Yet at the end shines already the light of Easter, the light of the Kingdom.



### **Let Your Light Shine**

When I disobeyed in ignorance Thy fatherly glory, I wasted in iniquities the riches that Thou gavest me. Wherefore, I cry to Thee with the voice of the prodigal son, saying, I have sinned before Thee, O compassionate Father, receive me repentant, and make me as one of Thy hired servants. (*Kontakion of the Sunday of the Prodigal Son*). The parable of the Prodigal Son forms an exact icon of repentance at its different stages. Sin is exile, enslavement to strangers, hunger. Repentance is the return from exile to our true home; it is to receive back our inheritance and freedom in the Father's house. To repent is not just to feel dissatisfied, but to make a decision and to act upon it.

### **Please Note:**

#### **The Proskomidia of the Divine Liturgy**

After vesting the priest **washes his hands** to indicate that he is approaching the altar of God with a pure heart. It is now that the Proskomidia proper or the preparation of the holy gifts takes place at the **Proskomedinyk** (prothesis) or side altar. The faithful do not participate in this ceremony for when it is performed the royal doors are closed. The priest, using a lance, proceeds to cut out the altar breads (portions or particles) from the **prosfora** (loaves of oblation) and places them on the paten. The first portion cut out is the **Lamb** in the form of a square, which will later be used for the priest's communion. The Lamb is symbolic of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, Who took the sins of mankind upon Himself and redeemed man by His death on the cross. The lance is symbolic of the lance used by the Roman soldier who pierced the side of Christ during the crucifixion. After the Lamb has been cut out the priest proceeds to cut out the **smaller particles**, which will be used later for the Holy Communion of the faithful. The particles are arranged on the paten in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints whose names are mentioned at the same time. Some particles are also arranged in memory of spiritual persons of varying degrees and dignity and some for all the living for whose intention the Mass is being said. At the end particles are placed on the paten in commemoration of the souls of the dead. When the paten holding the particles and the Lamb is ready the priest pours a little wine into the chalice and adds a drop or two of water. The asterisk or star is opened and placed over the particles on the paten. Then paten and chalice are each covered with their own veils or palls. Both of these are covered with a third and larger veil or **aer**. The priest who petitions God to bless the donors and all those for whom the gifts are being offered now incenses the holy offerings. The Proskomidia reminds us of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the redemption in which all mankind has a share. In a special way the Proskomidia is symbolic of the birth of Christ and His hidden life. The paten reminds us of the manger where Mary placed the Infant Jesus and the asterisk recalls the star, which guided the three kings of the East to Bethlehem. The veils indicate the hidden life of Jesus Christ, which lasted for about 30 years before. He began to teach publicly.